

As the Nation mourns the deaths of thousands of our fellow citizens, as we take stock of the destruction caused by last week's terrorist attacks, we should also pause for a moment to reflect on the brave men and women in New York City who put their lives on the line to protect fellow citizens.

In every small town and suburb and big city across America, there are people just like the over 300 first responders who gave their lives in New York. In Michigan, we too have experienced the loss of emergency personnel. Last year alone, four Michigan firefighters lost their lives. Each of these deaths is a tragedy for family, friends, and community.

What happened at the World Trade Center in New York will live in our memories forever. We can be proud that at a time of great peril, the Nation's first responders answered the call, conducting themselves with a selflessness and dedication that does credit to themselves, their city, and their country.

Many thousands of people would not be alive today if it were not for the heroic efforts of these men and women. In one of the country's darkest hours, they kept faith with their colleagues, with those in need, and with their country.

Our Nation's founders were deeply committed to the idea that the individual had an obligation to serve the community. The Nation's first responders live this ideal every day. They lived it again on September 11, and because they did, they gave their lives.

While we have cause to mourn these deaths, we should also celebrate the values their lives exhibited, values that represent the very best of America.

We have suffered a grievous loss. But the wonderful thing about America is that we will bounce back. For every firefighter who fell on September 11, someone else will take his place. For every emergency responder who paid with his life, another will emerge. For every police and port authority officer who fell in the line of duty, another citizen will answer the call. That is the American way.

On September 11, the Nation's firefighters showed the world what courage means. If we expect the fire services—many of whom depend on volunteers—to deal with terrorist attacks, we have a responsibility to provide them with the help they need so that they can continue to protect lives and property.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the conference on the defense authorization bill, I will be pushing for a large increase in the authorized funding for the Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program to \$1 billion for each fiscal years 2002, 2003, and 2004.

Our thoughts and our prayers are with the families of the fallen heroes to whom we owe so much. God bless those who have died, God bless their families, and God bless America.

Mr. WALSH. Madam Speaker, I also rise in support of this resolution sponsored by Congressmen ENGEL and WATTS, that expresses our profound sorrow for the senseless loss of life and injuries suffered by our heroic first responders as a result of the World Trade Center, Pentagon, and Pennsylvania tragedies on Tuesday, September 11, 2001. My prayers, thoughts and deepest sympathies are with their families and loved ones at this definitive moment in American history.

Tocqueville once said of Americans, "They show with complacency how an enlightened

regard for themselves constantly prompts them to assist one another and inclines their willingness to sacrifice a portion of their time and property to the welfare of the state." These words describe the 300 firefighters and 70 police officers that have died in this senseless tragedy. Their names are forever inscribed on the portals of fame. America now truly understands how much we as a nation owe these heroic people, both those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, and those who continue to serve with honor day in and day out. God help us always to have these men and women who believe in what they are doing and who will fight to the very end for what they believe.

This resolution also speaks to the unity of public safety officers. There is an old saying in the fire service that goes, "Firemen are a brotherhood. They do not care what department a man belongs, if he is a fireman enrolled for the same purpose, fighting under the same banner, they are ready to extend the hand of fellowship." This is true literally and figuratively. Literally, there are many families who serve together as firefighters and police officers or both in New York City. Currently, they are working to help recover their figurative brothers and sisters. This figurative bond was also evident with the outpouring of help that came into the New York City, and Virginia from around the country and the world. So much help, that some of it had to be turned away. The literal and figurative unity is stronger than ever as a result of the attacks on our country.

When I visited the Pentagon and "Ground Zero" with President Bush in New York, I saw first hand the destruction and the tireless rescue efforts underway. I thought to myself, "why do these people, the firefighters and police officers, do what they do?" I soon recalled a book I had read in the 1970's by Dennis Smith, a retired New York City fireman and founder of Firehouse Magazine who also assisted in the rescue efforts. In his classic book "Report from Engine Co. 82", an account of his life on a South Bronx fireman, Smith said after recovering a victim who had perished in a fire, "I don't say anything further, nor does Billy, as I look up to his eyes. They are almost fully closed, but I can see they are wet and teary. The corneas are red from heat and smoke, and light reflects from the watered surface, and they sparkle. I wish my wife, my mother, and everyone who has ever asked me why I do what I do, could see the humanity, the sympathy, the sadness of these eyes, because this is the reason I continue to be a firefighter." America saw this same scene played out time and time again on September 11th and the following days. As a result, we as a nation can start to understand why they continuously sacrifice their lives and pay them a long overdue thank you.

We thank them, we praise them, and we will never forget them. God bless these heroes, their families and God bless America.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 233.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of

those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 233.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

□ 1800

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GILCHREST) at 6 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will now put the question on each motion to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

House Concurrent Resolution 243, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 2559, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 2910, by the yeas and nays;

House Concurrent Resolution 233, by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER MEDAL OF VALOR IN RESPONSE TO TERRORIST ATTACKS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 243.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr.